



Anita B. Gorman Conservation

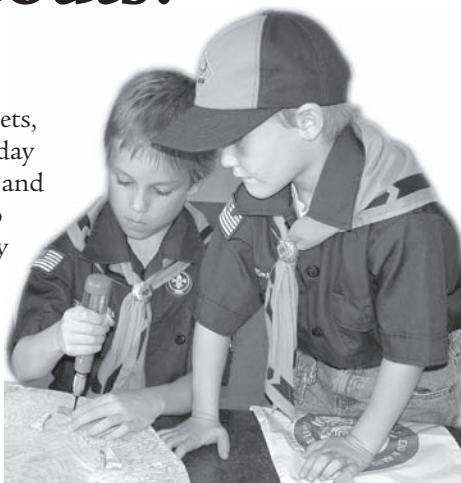
Discovery Center

WINTER 2010

Calling all Scouts!

Scout Discovery Saturday
February 27, 10:00 to 3:00

Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies, Cadets, Cub Scouts and Webelos. Join us for a day of hands-on activities designed for fun and badge achievement. From 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., we'll provide the opportunity to experience a variety of conservation activities and outdoor skills including woodworking, knot tying, archery, pellet guns, tree identification, map and compass, fire starting, outdoor cooking, and more! Don't miss this special day created just for Scouts!



WILDLIFE CORNER

Winter Wanderers

Have you noticed any new feathered visitors in your backyard? Along with the cold winter air comes a common Missouri winter resident, the **dark-eyed junco**. You can identify dark-eyed juncos by their dark gray body and white belly, pale beak and of course, their dark eyes. These flashy little sparrows breed in coniferous or mixed-coniferous forests across Canada, the western U.S., and the Appalachians in the summer. During the winter you'll find juncos in open woodlands, fields, and backyards of Missouri.

Juncos are birds that feed on the ground pecking or scratching for seeds around feeders, and are often seen at the Discovery Center. They typically return to the same areas each winter, and have a hierarchy or pecking order. Aggressive behavior at feeders is an expression of their dominance.

The song of the dark-eyed junco is a short trill or series of trills on one or more pitches. To learn more about juncos and other Missouri birds, please join us at the Discovery Center for one of our winter birding programs.

— Steve Jacobsen



The dark-eyed junco is known as the "snowbird" of bird feeders where it may be the most abundant species present.

A new manager for the Discovery Center

Stacey Davis, former Manager at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center transferred to become Discovery Center Manager at Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center. Stacey succeeds Bob Fluchel who retired in October 2009.

A Missouri native, Stacey attended Missouri State University where she earned a B.S. and M.S. in Biology. Her career with MDC started when, as an hourly employee, she contributed to a research study focusing on reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals in the Ozarks. She then moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, serving as

manager of Waddell Outdoor Education Center, a 300 acre area with ponds, woods, and swamps. She learned a lot in that job, but was grateful for the opportunity to return to Missouri when her husband was hired for a job with MDC in 2001. Upon returning to MO, she taught



Environmental Science and Biology at Johnson County Community College and volunteered at the Discovery Center. In the spring of 2003, she took the position of Conservation Education Consultant in St. Joseph and in 2005 was promoted to Conservation Education Programs Supervisor for the Northwest Region. During the summer of 2007 she assumed the position of Nature Center Manager at Burr Oak Woods.

In addition to her conservation work and leadership, Stacey loves to play in the outdoors. When possible, Stacey enjoys Missouri's natural resources by participating in a variety of recreational opportunities. Her interests include canoeing, backpacking, hunting, and native gardening.



FISHING FRENZY

Walk-in (All ages) Do you think of fishing when it is cold and snowy? Winter is the perfect time to learn some skills to help you become a better angler. Join us at the Discovery Center as we learn important knots, tie jigs, rig a line, and more. There will be something for all ages to enjoy.

■ **JANUARY 23 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**

REGAL EAGLES

Walk-in (All ages) Did you know Missouri is one of the leading bald eagle states? Each fall, thousands of these great birds migrate south from their nesting sites in Canada and the Great Lakes Region. Eagles take up residency wherever they can find open water and plentiful food. Due to our big rivers, many reservoirs, and open wetlands, Missouri is especially attractive to these magnificent birds. Today we celebrate eagles by constructing our own eagle's nest, making eagle hats, comparing our arm span to an eagle's wingspan, and playing the raptor restore game.

■ **JANUARY 30 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**

WINTER PATTERNS

Walk-in (All ages) As winter progresses, it provides us with the opportunity to see many patterns in nature that we cannot otherwise see. The leafless trees reveal branch patterns and the prairie showcases a variety of grass patterns. Join us for a day of gathering and working with varied natural materials as we create shadow patterns. We will also create one-of-a-kind leaf prints arranging varied leaves colored with block inks, using the etching press to capture the patterns.

■ **FEBRUARY 6 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**

Activities marked *Walk-in* do not require registration. Activities that require reservations are limited to Missouri residents and are marked *By registration*. To register, **call 816-759-7300**. All programs are free of charge. Parents or guardians must accompany children under age 12.

WINTER MAMMALS

Walk-in (All ages) Some mammals hibernate, while others are active throughout the winter. Deer, rabbits, squirrels, and foxes are just some of the active winter mammals in Missouri. They need to be tough and resourceful to make it through the harsh conditions. Food can be hard to find, and often is covered in a blanket of snow. Come out and learn about Missouri's winter mammals and how these animals are adapted to survive. We'll make sawdust mammal footprints, track them in the mammal maze, and even go outside to look for mammal signs.

■ **JANUARY 2 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**

TRACKS N' T-SHIRTS

Walk-in (All ages) Winter is the best time to explore the outdoors in search of animal tracks in the snow and ice. Learn to identify the local wildlife by making your own tracks on a t-shirt. We'll use fabric inks and latex molded tracks to fashion a wearable work of art. Bring your own shirt or use one of ours.

■ **JANUARY 9 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**

BACKYARD BRRRRRD'S

Walk-in (All ages) Do you enjoy bird watching? If you do then join us at the Discovery Center for a day of winter bird activities. You will have the chance to learn bird calls and go winter bird watching. In addition, you can build a bird feeder (ages 9 and up) helping our feathered friends during this winter season when food is scarce. Bird feeder construction will start on the hour with the last class at 2 p.m.

■ **JANUARY 16 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**



Materials used in Discovery Center Saturday programs are funded in part by a donation provided by the Water Garden Society of Kansas City. We give a big thanks! Build a blue bird nest box with Feathered Friends, Saturday, February 20 at the Discovery Center.

LOVE IS FOR THE BIRDS

Walk-in (All ages) The season of love is upon us as we anticipate the spring thaw and the wooing to begin. As the days lengthen, the songbirds begin arriving from the south, announcing their arrival with the sounds of



spring. Bird calls fill the air as males begin seeking out mates. Meanwhile, year-round residents like the greater prairie-chicken will soon begin their elaborate courtship behavior. Males seek out open hilltops in the prairie and begin calling,

drumming their wings, and inflating their colorful neck sacs to attract hens. These pre-dawn booming grounds, known as leks, are well worth the trip if you can get up early enough. Join us for a closer look at the complexity of bird breeding behavior. We will investigate some gender differences specific to the bird world, quiz your plumage knowledge, and learn about nearby locations to best witness these fascinating displays of affection.

■ **FEBRUARY 13 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**

FEATHERED FRIENDS

Walk-in (All ages) What's Missouri's state bird? What bird is dark grey and only here in the winter? (Hint: turn to the front page.) Join us to learn basic bird watching skills and ways to help birds in their habitat. You will have the opportunity to go on a bird watching hike, learn the calls of birds, and make a nesting box to help the state bird of Missouri. Bird house construction (for ages 9 and up) will begin on the hour with the last class at 2 p.m.

■ **FEBRUARY 20 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**

SCOUT DISCOVERY DAY

Walk-in (All ages) Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies, Cadets, Cub Scouts and Webelos – join us for a day



of hands-on activities designed for fun and badge achievement. We'll have learning stations and exhibits set up throughout the center to provide opportunities to experience a variety of conservation activities and outdoor skills including woodworking, knot tying, archery, pellet guns, tree and plant identification, map and

compass, fire starting, and outdoor cooking, and more! Don't miss out on this day created especially for Scouts!

■ **FEBRUARY 27 / SATURDAY / 10 AM – 3 PM**



THE NEW KID'S MAGAZINE FROM THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Young Missourians will want to sign up for a subscription of *XPLOR*, a multi-media mash-up billed by the Missouri Department of Conservation as "nature-tainment."

Recognizing that young people today get information in dramatically different ways than previous generations, the Conservation Department has devised a challenging, exciting experience that combines the traditional magazine format and online content. *XPLOR* targets readers 7 through 12 years old. Subscribers will be signing up for natural-world adventures that will reward them throughout their lives. Six times a year we'll bring you eye-popping art, photos and stories about Missouri's coolest critters, niftiest natural places, liveliest outdoor activities and people who have made a living from the wild. Other regular *XPLOR* print features will include a "YUCK!" department about things slimy, gooey, stinky and just plain gross, plus audio and video clips that bring nature to life. The magazine will cover the full range of outdoor nature-related activities, from hunting and fishing to bird watching and hands-on conservation.

Subscriptions are free to Missouri residents. Nonresidents in the United States can subscribe for \$5 a year. *XPLOR* will ignite children's curiosity unlike any other nature magazine. Don't keep the door closed another minute! Come outside with us and *XPLOR*!



Go to www.mdc.mo.gov/15287

Call 573-522-4115, ext. 3856 or 3249,

or write to *XPLOR*, PO Box 180,

Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0180



Don Sear's expertise, willingness to help where needed, and patient and kind spirit will be missed.

IN MEMORY OF DON SEARS

With sadness we note the passing of Don Sears, volunteer with Missouri Department of Conservation. For the last 22 years, Don shared his love of hunting and our natural resources through his active involvement in the volunteer program. To ensure the public had a safe and enjoyable hunting experience, he served as a Hunter Education Instructor teaching and assisting with a total of 480 classes. Based on his significant contributions, he was recognized as Kansas City Region Instructor of the Year in both 1990 and 1998. In 2003, Don was inducted to the Kansas City Region Instructor Hall of Fame. In addition, Don volunteered 500 hours at Discovery Center over the past 5-1/2 years. He helped teach workshop programs and assisted with special programs including the Missouri State Fair, Youth Pheasant Hunts, and Freedom School. Don's expertise, willingness to help where needed, and patient and kind spirit will be missed.

Discovery Center Newsletter

Goes Electronic

We are all feeling the squeeze. During difficult economic times we have to make hard decisions. The Discovery Center has had to evaluate our operations and cut back. So as not to impact our educational programming, we are scaling back on our printing and mailing expenses. Help us out and go green. To receive an electronic version of our newsletter, please subscribe at <http://lists.mo.gov/mailman/listinfo/discoverycenter>.

We will continue to mail paper versions to Missouri residents who prefer this option, but Kansas residents may either subscribe via e-mail or be removed from our mailing list. Don't let this keep you from being informed, you may access our schedule at <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/kcmetro/>.



If you've never seen a bald eagle in the wild, then what are you waiting for? You don't need to go to Alaska or the Great Lakes. Missouri is the winter home to thousands of bald eagles migrating from northern states. Unfrozen water for fishing and a taste for migrating waterfowl make our state a winter haven for eagles. An opportunity to view eagles this winter will be at **Eagle Days at Smithville Lake on January 9-10**. Special activities and spotting scopes will be set up for your eagle viewing pleasure. For more information, check for Eagle Days events at www.mdc.mo.gov



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